

Human Services Funding Committee / Community Development Committee (CDC)
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PUBLIC HEARING
December 3, 2007

Committee Members Attending: Claude Tellier, Paulette Brooks, Isaac BenEzra
Town Staff Spokesperson: Roy Rosenblatt. *Absent Committee Members:* Tamara Rutland-Mills, Jana McClure, Mary Jane Laus.

Select Board: Anne Awad, Gerald Weiss, Alisa Brewer, Hwei-Ling Greeney, Robert Kusner;
Town Manager: Laurence Shaffer. *Public Attending:* Kathy Kellogg, Lorie Omer, Ryan Marr, Heather McCormack, David Howard, Jonathan Burgess, Hunter Dean Wallenglord, Julia Sherratt, Sarah Berquist, Michael Dunn, Malcolm Chisholm, Daniel M. Kent, A.D. Beck, Madeline Yocty, Diana Stein, Ron Evans, Samuel Bearg, Justin Porter, Erliano Salazar, Corey Gillis, Mollie Murnane, David Klotz, Alex Arsenault, Jonathan Werner

The Public Hearing for the Community Development Block Grant [CDBG] application began at 7:10 p.m. on Monday, December 3, 2007 in the Town Meeting Room, Town Hall, Amherst, MA. Mr. Roy Rosenblatt addressed the Select Board and community present at the meeting. He discussed the current CDBG funding and proposed strategy for future funding as well as viewership on Amherst Community Access Television channel 17. Mr. Rosenblatt explained that for the first two years of funding, Amherst was considered a Mini-entitlement community. Thereafter, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts removed that status from the town for two years. Now, Amherst is once again a Mini-entitlement community guaranteed for two years.

The FY05 Drainage project at Pomeroy Lane funded by CDBG is now complete. The FY06 affordable rental project on Main Street is being managed by the Main Street Limited Liability Corp and is expecting occupancy in one year. Funds have been distributed for approximately 10 families with tuition assistance in childcare. The funding for a case worker in the school department for low and moderate income children has been completed. The plan for mortgage subsidies in Amherst has been modified. The goal of one program included 3 loans using Community Preservation Act [CPA] funds and 3 loans using CDBG funds. The CPA funds must be deed restricted in resale if a mortgage is given. Terms for repayment (if any) are still being worked out.

FY07 CDBG grant housing modifications were discussed. Kitchen at Chestnut Court should be renovated by spring/summer 2008. The CDBG rules restrict the funding for barrier removal only and not other modifications in compliance to American Disabilities Act [ADA].
Future funding:

Priorities will be finalized after hearing input from Select Board and community at large. The committee has taken the Comprehensive Planning Committee's priorities, strategy's and goals as a guideline. The committee has examined whether to rehabilitate properties for affordable housing. Rental units with vouchers is a critical need with a target date of 2013 changes.

Homelessness was discussed at length. The select board recommended that a feasibility study for SRO housing in Amherst be proposed in this year's CDBG request for funds. The Public Hearing closed at 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Paulette Brooks